

VZCZCXRO4421
PP RUEHIK
DE RUEHBS #0126/01 0331702
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 021702Z FEB 10
FM USEU BRUSSELS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 000126

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [EUN](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: PAKISTAN'S AMBASSADOR DETAILS HIS PRIORITIES WITH
EUROPEAN UNION

BRUSSELS 00000126 001.2 OF 002

Sensitive but Unclassified. Please handle accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Newly arrived Pakistan Ambassador to the European Union Jalil Abbas Jilani outlined Pakistan's priority topics with the EU during a courtesy call with Ambassador Kennard January 29. Pakistan hopes to formalize relations with the EU by establishing a regular summit schedule (rather than scheduling them on an ad hoc basis), gaining access to the EU's trade preference scheme GSP Plus, and eventually beginning Free Trade Agreement negotiations with the European Union. Jilani added that Pakistan's relationship with the EU is a recent one, but strengthening the economic and trade relationship is in Pakistan's security and economic interests. Jilani specifically requested that the United States assist Pakistan in gaining access to the EU's GSP Plus scheme. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador Jilani reported the top priority is for Pakistan and the EU to strengthen their relationship through a regular summit schedule. Although Pakistan and the EU are scheduled to hold an April 21 Summit in Brussels (which PM Gilani will attend), it will be only the second such summit (after the June 2009 summit) and was scheduled on an ad hoc basis. Jilani reported the "ad hoc" status is an anathema in Pakistan since it implies only a situational relationship. Pakistan would prefer a more permanent relationship, which would then allow Pakistan and the EU to enter into other engagements such as political, nonproliferation, trade, and regional security dialogues. (Note: With the notable exception of the UK, many member states are skeptical about the political necessity to deepen relations with Pakistan and commit to a permanent summit schedule. End note.)

¶3. (SBU) The second major item on Pakistan's agenda is to gain access to the EU's GSP Plus concession scheme. Jilani emphasized that Pakistan's economy has suffered drastically since 2005 due to the security situation, and that the Pakistani people need economic concessions in order to remain supportive of the ongoing Pakistani military operations. Jilani reported that the EU does 15 billion dollars worth of trade annually with the European Union, the majority of which is with the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Jilani said there are two ways Pakistan would be able to have access to GSP Plus. First, the EU could amend the current criteria for GSP Plus to apply to any country affected by terrorism. However, the EU-fixed criteria for GSP Plus is not set to be reviewed until the beginning of 2012, making 2013 the earliest date at which Pakistan would be able to qualify. The second way for Pakistan to access GSP Plus would be through a Pakistan-specific WTO waiver. (Note: The EU granted Pakistan access to its original GSP scheme after September 11, 2001; however, India took the EU to the WTO for not using fixed criteria and won, forcing the EU to change

its entire scheme. End note.) Jilani emphasized that U.S. support for GSP Plus for Pakistan, either through the WTO waiver or through changing the EU fixed criteria, would be helpful.

¶4. (SBU) The final priority for Pakistan is to begin Free Trade Agreement negotiations. Jilani reported the EU and Pakistan held preliminary discussions three months ago, but that the EU and Pakistan are still a significant distance from formal negotiations. Jilani noted, however, that GSP Plus is a higher priority for Pakistan.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Privately, EU officials remain pessimistic about Pakistan's ability to access the GSP Plus system in a timely manner, given that the review process for the fixed criteria is not scheduled until early 2012. They are unwilling to look at any exceptions for Pakistan (unless explicitly WTO approved), given the previous experience. However, new EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton is the former Trade Commissioner and she may have some ideas and political weight to move the Commission bureaucracy towards a creative solution for opening up export markets to Pakistan. Although there is some political momentum in the EU to enhance its relationship with Pakistan, maneuvering through the fixed criteria will be a major challenge. End Comment

¶6. (U) Biographic Note: Jilani arrived in Brussels December 1, 2009, from his previous appointment as Ambassador to Australia (2007 to 2009). He served as the Government's Spokesman on Foreign Affairs (2005 and as Director General (South Asia and SAARC) from 2003 to 2007. Per press reporting, India declared Jilani persona non grata while serving as the Acting High Commissioner in New Delhi in 2003 for reportedly giving money to activists associated with the

BRUSSELS 00000126 002.2 OF 002

Kashmiri separatist movement. He previously has held diplomatic assignments in Jeddah, London, Washington, and New Delhi. He is married with three children.

KENNARD

.